THE

ADVICE

OF THE

LORDS of *Middleburrough*;

Brought into the *Assembly* of the States-Provincial of *Zealand*.

Great LORDS,

THE Lords Deputies of *Middleburrough*, after divers Deliberations concerning the 4th Point for which they were Summoned together, relating to the raising of 16000 Men, and finding themselves Summoned *De Novo* to bring in their Resolution into the States-Provincial concerning this Affair, Do declare in the Name of the Lords their Principals, after divers and serious considerations of that matter, That the said Levies ought not be declined at this time, in relation to the present constitution of affairs.

For that at this time the greatest Interest of this State will be to find out all manner of ways to prevent any further Difference with the King of *France*, and to endeavour after the Security of a firm Peace; To which end, one of the chiefest Mediums, nay the only Medium, and that too without the least loss of time to use all endeavours, with the most importune Intercessions, for a speedy accomodation between *France* and *Spain*, whether it be by a yielding to the *French* Pretended Dot or some other Equivalent, for that to propound to the Levies intended, is but the way to make *Spain* more different and less inclined to accept of the Proposals of *France*, the remover from the speedier accomodation or diminishing of his Pretensions and pretences; and in case the Zeeland Levies and Resolutions of this State might stir up some apprehensions in the bosome of his Majesty of *France* to Treat upon Reasonable terms with the K. of *Spain*; yet the hoped for Moderation in the *French* Pretensions, would not be a compensation for the excessive Charge of the States, which will be, as we guess, about Twelve Millions, which will be expended for raising and maintaining the 16000 Men, the Equipage at Sea, and all things relating thereto; besides which, 'tis not without reason to think that the said Levies would be the cause to think that *France* would advance his pretences, and the more, for that so much time hath been spent fruitless to find out a Reasonable accomodation, nay, it may breed such an animosity in *France*, that by force of his Arms he may in time make himself Master of all his pretences, which must engage *Spain*, as 'tis feared, in a very fatal and desperate War, in which case it will be very difficult for this State to escape free; and although this Republique might escape free, yet *Spain* is to expect no other assistance from this State, than only with the advantage of 16000 Men more added to them, with which *Spain* is not to expect any great success in the *Netherlands*, in regard that *Spain* are not only deficient in their Treaties and in all Orders required for the welfare of the *Netherlands*, by reason of Money coming so slowly from *Spain*; and above all this, they cannot expect any supplies from the Northern Crowns or *Germany*, especially as Affairs stand at present, and much less from *England*, according to their repeated Declarations: and we think it cannot be good for this State to hazard themselves only with *Spain* against the Power of *France*; nay, supposing the

Reprinted at London, and Sold by Walter Davis. 1688.

the best, after so many Difficulties and Dangers, 'tis not to be expected in all likelihood to make a better Peace then now is proffered; and in case that these Levies is the only thing required of this State, for putting themselves in a posture of Defence against *France*, that then the said Lords of *Middleburrough* are of Opinion, that may be better done by the 50000 Men which they have already in Pay; and that it would be more necessary to think of such Methods as to put the Frontiers of this State, which now lye open and unprovided, into a posture of security and Defence, but as to what relates to the punctual Payment, with all other things necessary, relating to the said Levies, 'tis well known by all how difficult it will be, nay, almost impossible for the Province of *Zealand*, especially the City of *Middleburgh*, to find out wherewithal to do it; for that this Province, since the Year 1672, through their great Innundations, Wars, excessive Taxes, most of the Money being spent out of this Province, have been so severely opprest; that Thousands of Debts, and those Yearly growing upon us, remain yet unpaid: besides all which, we plainly foresee that great summs of Money will yet come short, relating to the ordinary and extry State of the War, by reason of diminishing and dividing the Estates of the Inhabitants, which also appears out of the Advices of other Members of the State, who are of a contrary opinion to us, in relation to the Levies; as also the miserable condition of the Admiralty gives all people to believe in what a poor condition the Province of *Zealand* is, and especially the City of *Middleburgh*, whose Inhabitants, since the Year 1672, and so from time to time, through a general diminishing of their Estates to a third part, as also the diverting and decreasing of the Commerce, the only expedient by which they can live, are so impoverish'd and melted away, that except their Burdens be eased, and a speedy restoration of their Trade, 'tis to be feared they will scarce be able for the time to come to contribute towards the maintaining and upholding of this Republique; which Difficulties remain yet unmoved. For which reason, the Lords of *Middleburgh*, from upright hearts and sincere affection for the well-being of this State and their good Subjects, are forced in this present juncture of Affairs, to decline the aforesaid Levies: Yet they declare to your Honours, That as they have always sufficiently showed themselves so, they will never be wanting for Preservation of the *State* upon all occasions of inevitable necessity, nay, and beyond their abilities to Contribute, with all punctuality, as well as other Cities and Members of this Province.

Reprinted at London, *and sold by* VValter Davis, 1684.